

## three kids and a swimming pool by moonvision

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**Summary:** Jonathan Byers has no idea why Nancy Wheeler and Steve Harrington always ask him to join them. — hinted Jonathan/Nancy/Steve; rambly.

## three kids and a swimming pool

**notes**— i love jonathan byers. also, this is weird and rambly cos i'm trying to get back into the swing of actually writing about things i enjoy lol.

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His arms encircle her thin *thin* waist and her spidery eyelashes skate across speckled cheeks. Her sweet pink lips are curled around startlingly white teeth, her soft laughter fills the air around the two of them.

Steve smiles down at her, his hair swept back softly, brown eyes so so warm as he watches Nancy snuggle her head into his chest. They're by his pool, and Jonathan feels a strange sense of *deja vu*, except this time he's there with them. Right where Barbara had sat, feeling as alone as he does right now.

Jonathan pries his eyes away from the two of them, wrapped up around each other and *smiling* as though there are no cares in the world.

It's the week before the New Year. Jonathan has his camera placed heavy and warm against his chest, the strap chafing his neck in the best way. He wonders why they invited him here. He wonders why he even came. And yet he's incapable of resisting Nancy's smile or Steve's warm eyes.

He wonders why they've had a change of heart about him. Does defeating a dimension-defying monster together make them friends now?

Nancy had gifted him the camera that rests against his heartbeat, and Jonathan relaxes against the calming thumping in his chest. Nancy had told him that while she had helped pick out the camera, she wasn't the one who had paid for it. Steve had insisted upon buying a replacement for Jonathan, after what he admitted was an irrational

move in his anger over Jonathan's pictures. After a stuttered apology, Steve had laughed at Jonathan, even ruffled the other teen's hair, and had forgiven him. Steve and Nancy seemed to be able to tell that Jonathan wasn't fully aware he'd crossed a social line taking those photos. He was never really good at those anyway, social lines that is.

"Dance with us!" Nancy smiled wider than Jonathan had seen from the stressed girl in the time he'd known her. They were slowly discovering that their friendship worked, for some odd reason. Something about working together to discover a monster from an alternate dimension made two people begin to craft a relationship with one another. Jonathan watched the happiness the girl radiated. He was glad there was something to distract her from the overwhelming grief that'd been clouding the girl's head since the loss of Barbara had really sunk in.

"C'mon man." Steve unwrapped Nancy from himself, holding out a hand for Jonathan to take. Jonathan's heart thumped a little harder against his chest, as he reluctantly removed his camera from around his neck, wrapping one hand around Steve's slightly larger one and the other hand enveloped Nancy's incredibly small and delicate fingers with his own. Jonathan kept his hair in his eyes and his head down, as Steve and Nancy began to spin the three of them around slowly, a poor imitation of dancing.

A warm hand released his hand to clasp his shoulder in silent concern, and Jonathan's eyes skittered up to face Steve's light brown eyes, looking far too worried about someone like Jonathan. And then the trio stopped spinning as Nancy's hand slipped from his to caress his cheek gently and Jonathan felt like his eyes were going to pop out of his head as his gaze swept from Steve to Nancy then back to Steve.

Jonathan was nervous. He'd always been a nervous kid. Unable to really connect with others, clutching onto things like his photography and his music that he carefully handpicked and curated to share with Will, who had a similar hard time connecting with other kids outside of his quartet of nerds, as Jonathan liked to call them. Jonathan liked working nights at the theater, able to relax in the dark and the silence, only bothered by the occasional rowdy teens who'd snuck out late in the night from their windows right under their parents noses. He found comfort in his constant routine. Work nights, make

breakfast for Will and Mom, go to school, sometimes ditch if he had an evening shift, and try to take some photos throughout the day.

When Will had been taken, nothing had devastated Jonathan as much as the disruption in the normalcy of his family's lives. Chester would trot into the woods everyday to sleep in the abandoned Castle Byers. Joyce would rampage throughout the house, her lights all that mattered if it meant that Will was *still there*. Jonathan had clutched onto the parts of his routine that hadn't been shredded to bits as he watched his mother fall apart and felt his own heart breaking when he'd thought that Will had died.

What was now dubbed the Upside Down week had been pushed to the furthestmost part of Jonathan's mind. Yet with the Upside Down week came plenty of changes. First of all, Jonathan had some semblance of friends. Nancy invited him to hang out with her and Steve, and while Jonathan was always reluctant, he also always accepted her invitations. To be around people that weren't his apathetic coworkers or his family was new for Jonathan. And yet Nancy kept calling and Jonathan kept saying yes.

After finding that he and Nancy worked as a team quite well, it was Steve's constant presence that surprised him. Away from his asshole ex-friend's as the teen called them, Steve was actually fun to be around, just as Nancy had tried to convince him that day in the woods. While Jonathan was adamant in his dislike for the other boy then, he found that he couldn't see himself hanging out with Nancy as comfortably if Steve wasn't there too. The both of them were a package deal, having repaired their relationship.

And yet they always asked him to join them.

Just a few days ago, Nancy, Steve and him had gone to Castleton Mall in Indianapolis, and spent the whole day *shopping* together. Jonathan had felt the whole experience was a bit surreal. They wanted to be his friend, and he found himself wanting to be their friend too, and he ignored the part of his heart that swelled anytime Nancy held his hand too tightly or Steve smiled at him too long.

Right now, Steve was watching him with those eyes and Nancy's lovely fingers were wrapped around his cheek and Jonathan was so

overwhelmed he was frozen. He stood completely still, shivering at the winter chill in the air, and closed his eyes so he wouldn't have to look at either of them. Nancy's eyes were too wide and too blue and Steve's were too warm and accepting and both of them were far too *concerned*. He'd never felt like this before. He'd never had anyone outside of his family look at him like they wanted him there, like he belonged and he was essential and *needed*.

The three of them stood by the steaming pool, Nancy Wheeler's hand was wrapped in Steve Harrington's and her other hand was soft around Jonathan Byers' cheek. Steve Harrington's hand was enveloping Nancy Wheeler's and his other was around Jonathan Byers' and it felt *right* somehow. Nancy and Steve looked at each other, the two of them smiling softly, as they leaned in to wrap themselves around Jonathan Byers.

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